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Held at Headquarters, New York,
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President: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency [14]

  (a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Agency

  (b) Draft resolution

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Peerthum (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 14

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

(a) NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE REPORT OF THE AGENCY (A/45/371)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/45/L.9)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item should be closed at 1 p.m. today.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives who wish to speak to put their names on the list as soon as possible.

I call on Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to present his report.

Mr. BLIX (International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)): In submitting the annual report of the IAEA to the General Assembly, I should like to begin by commenting on three major topics of relevance to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy: first, the current confrontation in the Middle East; second, conclusions drawn at the recent Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty concerning the safeguards system of the IAEA; and, third, the risk of global warming and the possible responses to it in the field of energy. I shall thereafter discuss the role of the IAEA in the fields of nuclear safety, nuclear waste, transfer of technology and assistance to developing countries, and I shall conclude with some comments on the financing and management of the Agency within the United Nations system.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

The shock waves of the current confrontation in the Middle East are affecting all countries in the world and all organizations in the United Nations family. To the IAEA, some features in the present situation in the Middle East are of particular relevance.

First of all, the confrontation highlights the special and dramatic dangers that arise in a conflict-ridden region from the presence of weapons of mass destruction. It seems clear that a future, peaceful evolution in this area will require not only broad political accommodation but also confidence, created by verified arms control commitments, notably in respect of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction. The recent study undertaken within the United Nations of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East provides a valuable analysis of these problems. The IAEA secretariat was pleased to contribute some expertise to that study.

One of the central tasks of the IAEA is to verify, through its safeguards activities, that material and installations devoted to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are used exclusively for such purposes, and the Agency is itself engaged in promoting the wider use of safeguards in the Middle East. Under resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the IAEA, I have been consulting States in the region with a view to applying Agency safeguards to all nuclear installations in the area. What I have found so far is that the deep mutual distrust that has reigned for so long in this region and the presence of non-safeguarded fissionable material in one State may require special safeguards approaches which are more intrusive in nature, in order to create confidence.

One might also consider whether, in the context of restoring peaceful relations in the area, programmes of regional nuclear co-operation could be added to the safeguards as an important factor yielding both economic benefits and mutual

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transparence. Confidence through control by verification would then be strengthened by confidence through co-operation. In some other, admittedly more peaceful, regions of the world, such an approach has been fruitful.

A second important feature of the present confrontation is its impact on the world oil market. Fossil fuels today provide the world with some 90 per cent of its energy, and oil accounts for more than 40 per cent of fossil fuel. More than half the world's oil reserves are in the Middle East. This heavy dependence of the world economy on fossil fuel, notably oil from the Middle East, is no novelty. After the energy crisis of the mid-1970s, efforts at energy conservation and diversification led, in countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to a reduction in reliance on oil for electricity generation from 24 per cent to 9 per cent between 1974 and 1986. The amount of oil used for electricity generation was halved, and countries such as France and Sweden now burn hardly any oil to generate electricity. The use of nuclear power contributed significantly to this development. The question will inevitably arise again of whether nuclear power should be further relied on, in order to avoid too heavy a dependence on one source of energy and to increase diversity in the global energy mix.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

The Fourth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty concluded on 15 September. While it fell short of adopting a declaration, support was strong for the efforts to prevent a spread of nuclear weapons to more countries and for effective verification of the non-military use of nuclear material and installations. There was also strong support for an intensified transfer of technology in the nuclear energy field.

The IAEA is the chief multilateral instrument for such transfer of nuclear technology and its safeguards system is relied upon as the principal means of verifying that the non-proliferation pledges made under the NPT, as well as under the Latin American Treaty of Tlatelolco and the South Pacific Treaty of Rarotonga, are respected. With adherence by further States to these Treaties and an expanded use of nuclear material and installations, the safeguards role of the Agency has continuously increased in importance. It is likely to do so also in the future.

In a recent statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa has indicated that his country was prepared to accede to the NPT within a certain framework and was ready to commence talks with the IAEA on the conclusion of a comprehensive safeguards agreement on the country's nuclear facilities. The Agency is ready to begin these discussions.

Before highlighting a number of innovative ideas relating to safeguards which were broached at the NPT Review Conference, let me comment briefly on the current operation of the system. The Safeguards Implementation Report for 1989 was presented to the Board of Governors of the IAEA at its meeting last June. I am pleased to report that, as in previous years, the Safeguards Implementation Report concluded that nuclear material under safeguards in 1989 remained in peaceful nuclear activities or was otherwise adequately accounted for. Confidence in the reliability of the Agency's safeguards system was expressed at the NPT Review

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(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

Conference. At a time when the political climate is favourable to agreements on disarmament and arms control, it is clearly of great importance that the world's first system for on-site inspection should be successful and thereby facilitate acceptance of disarmament and arms control agreements relying on on-site inspection and verification.

The coverage of IAEA safeguards has continued to increase. As of October 1990 safeguards agreements pursuant to the Non-Proliferation Treaty are in force with 84 of the 137 non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty. Fifty-three of these 137 States Parties to the NPT have not yet concluded an agreement with the Agency pursuant to article III of the Treaty. The Agency's secretariat is continuously trying to conclude safeguards agreements with those States. I trust that negotiations that have been taking place with one of these States with significant nuclear installations will be resumed. The system now covers 922 installations, including 183 power reactors, 173 research reactors, 43 fuel fabrication plants, 7 enrichment plants and 5 reprocessing plants, thus encompassing 95 per cent of all nuclear installations outside nuclear-weapon States.

A number of improvements have been made in the implementation of safeguards. The serious financial constraints that have accompanied seven consecutive years of zero real growth have made an optimal use of the Agency's resources all the more necessary. Significant savings have been achieved at the Agency end by improved resource utilization through modifications in organization, management and methods. Other savings depend upon the participating States. I have urged - and many members have accepted - a simplified system for the designation of safeguards inspectors, and this allows for some savings. However, ceilings on the number of inspectors and other restrictions placed by some countries on inspector designations still complicate our work and contribute to costs. In my view, IAEA

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inspectors should not be seen as nationals of particular countries but as the international civil servants they are. It would greatly help our task if member States could accept the inspector's United Nations laissez-passer or an IAEA inspector passport without requiring a visa while on assignment.

Among the recommendations made at the Fourth NPT Review Conference regarding IAEA safeguards, I would mention the following:

First, to utilize new cost-effective safeguards technologies and approaches, including randomized inspections;

Secondly, to ensure that adequate safeguards techniques are available with respect to reprocessing and the storage and use of separated plutonium;

Thirdly, to consider arrangements as foreseen in the IAEA statute for deposit with the Agency of any excess of plutonium and highly enriched uranium over what is needed by a member State;

Fourthly, to study the possible scope, application and procedures of "special inspections" for circumstances requiring the restoration of confidence;

Fifthly, to consider the wider application of safeguards under voluntary offer agreements in nuclear-weapon States in the most economic and practical way, utilizing a scheme combining full reporting on civil nuclear activities with, where appropriate, verification based on randomization;

Sixthly, to offer for verification any nuclear materials and installations that may be transferred from military use to peaceful nuclear activities in nuclear-weapon States by submitting such material and installations to IAEA safeguards under voluntary offer safeguards agreements with the IAEA; and

Lastly, to improve the transparency of presentation to the public of results of our safeguards activities.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

The safeguards system was a bold innovation when it was first created some 30 years ago. Today Governments are accustomed to the presence of international inspectors at important national installations and do not see this presence as compromising their sovereignty. Indeed, they have a direct interest in the good functioning of the system and in providing maximum co-operation so as to facilitate its operation. It offers something they cannot bring about by themselves - namely, the confidence arising from outside impartial verification. For the same reasons, Governments have an interest in continuously updating the system to enable it to meet the new demands that arise through the development of nuclear technologies. Secure financing and increased resources are also needed in the future for a stable foundation and development of the safeguards system.

Another major subject of relevance for current consideration of nuclear power is the growing conviction that present levels of emission of carbon dicxide (CO_2) into the atmosphere are leading to global warming and must be reduced. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which has been set up by the World Meteorogical Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), has reported this year that a reduction of CO_2 by more than 60 per cent would be needed to stabilize the situation at today's level. For some other gases even more severe reductions would be needed. Even if a much less ambitious global target for reduction of CO_2 were to be set, extremely difficult questions would arise in the field of energy, where most of the CO_2 emissions originate.

In this context let me mention that, in order to bring as much objective data as possible to a comparative study of risk and environmental impact of different ways of generating electricity, the IAEA, jointly with ten other organizations, is arranging an expert symposium in Helsinki next spring. The study will examine the

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whole energy cycle, from mining to waste disposal. It is hoped that the results of this symposium might form part of the input at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which undoubtedly will be concerned with the question of global warming. It might be useful if, for the preparation of the Conference, some mechanisms were created in which causes of environmental degradation could be addressed, including population growth, industrialization, transport and energy - those sectors where policy choices must be made. United Nations organizations with special expertise in these areas could be called upon to play a more responsible role in the preparation of these topics for the Conference. To take the area of interest to the IAEA, the sooner a dialogue starts between the environmentalist constituencies that are now preparing for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the energy constituencies, the better. Both constituencies need to offer their input.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

To revert to the question of reduction of carbon dioxide emissions through measures in the energy sector, it seems probable that while an international consensus may be achievable on efforts to increase efficiency in energy use, agreements on restrictions in the use of energy will be hard to attain as energy is a key factor in economic development. Attention will undoubtedly focus on a greater use of energy sources that do not add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere: hydropower, nuclear power and renewable sources like photovoltaics and wind power.

The renewable commercial sources of energy - hydropower excluded - currently yield less than 0.3 per cent of the world's energy and are not expected within the next few decades to be capable of producing more than 3-5 per cent. Hydropower can be expanded in several developing countries but relatively little hydropower remains unexploited in the industrialized countries and environmental objections are often raised against its use.

Although significant opposition to nuclear power exists in many countries, it will not go unnoticed, as the search goes on for means of restraining carbon dioxide emissions, that nuclear-powered electricity generation is a very substantial source of carbon-dioxide-free energy and that the potential for an expansion of this source exists. About 17 per cent of the world's electricity is currently generated by nuclear power - a little less than that obtained through hydropower. Were this electricity instead to have been generated by coal, global carbon dioxide emissions would have been about 9 per cent greater. A comparison of the carbon dioxide emissions in the United Kingdom and France is also telling. In the United Kingdom where about 70 per cent of the electricity is generated by coal combustion, the carbon dioxide emission is 0.78 kilograms per kilowatt-hour. In France, with more than 70 per cent of the electricity being nuclear-generated, the carbon dioxide emission per kilowatt-hour is about one tenth of the British value.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

The objection that an expanded use of nuclear power, alone, is not capable of solving the world's carbon dioxide dilemma and therefore should not be encouraged will not, I am confident, stand up when the search for carbon dioxide reductions gets serious. All contributions to this objective will have to be considered. I note that the summit meeting of industrialized States at Houston last July declared:

"For countries that make such a choice, nuclear energy will continue to be an important contributor to our energy supply and can play a significant role in reducing the growth of greenhouse gas emissions".

The main reasons for public objections to a continued and expanded use of nuclear power lie in concern about accidents and about the disposal of radioactive waste. Both individually and collectively the members of the IAEA are pursuing efforts further to strengthen safety in all nuclear activities, including waste disposal. They also promote activities to assess risk more accurately and to analyse the causes and consequences of accidents and damage. Let me make a few comments on these activities.

A recent endeavour to improve information in the nuclear field is the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES), which has been developed by the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the IAEA. Any incident at a nuclear power station receives much media attention and it is often difficult both for the media people and for the public to judge the seriousness of the event. To promote a better understanding of the significance of unusual events, incidents and accidents, a seven-level scale has been worked out and is now being used on a trial basis.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

The technical causes and phases of the Chernobyl accident were analysed in detail under the auspices of the IAEA in 1986 and the Agency has since then been continuously engaged in various studies concerning the accident. This year, renewed attention has been drawn to the radiological consequences of the accident through appeals made last spring by the Byelorussian, Ukrainian and Russian Republics. Many United Nations bodies and specialized agencies have been called upon to provide assistance of various kinds to the affected Republics. Preparations for decisions on assistance are under way. At the request of the Soviet Union, the IAEA and a number of international organizations - such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Commission of the European Communities - with the full participation of the affected Republics have organized an international expert assessment of the radiological consequences of the accident and of the protective measures taken.

The work of technical missions - corroborating existing data and assessing the current radiological situation, individual and collective doses, environmental contamination and clinical health effects and evaluating the protective measures taken - will be completed by the end of this month. An interim report has been submitted to the United Nations to be considered in the context of the United Nations system's response in mitigating the consequences of the accident. The assessment will be concluded by the end of the year and in early 1991 an International Advisory Committee will review the task group reports and prepare a comprehensive report that will be published by the International Atomic Energy Agency. A very substantial effort is going into this assessment. Over 100 international experts in different fields have visited affected areas and thousands

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of measurements have been taken. The purpose of course is not only to obtain as accurate an assessment as possible but also, when such an assessment is made, to help identify the most appropriate responses.

Turning to IAEA activities to strengthen nuclear safety I should mention that a conference will be arranged by the IAEA in September 1991 to discuss the next phase of international co-operation in the field of the safety of nuclear power, including final disposal of waste. After the Chernobyl accident in 1986, an expanded nuclear safety programme was launched in the IAEA and many new activities were embarked upon. It is felt that the time has come not only to assess what has been accomplished but also to map the road to be taken in the future. Even though ultimate responsibility for nuclear power safety remains vested in the Governments of the countries in which the nuclear activity is taking place, safety is at the same time considered a question of international concern.

In line with this thinking, there has been a sharp increase in the services of the IAEA in the field of nuclear power safety. Especially after the political changes in East and Central Europe many missions have been requested to review the siting, construction and operation of nuclear plants and to inquire into past incidents. A large project has been set up to look into the safety of the first generation of WWER-440 reactors - with the participation of the Soviet Union, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Bulgaria, Germany and several other Western countries, the European Communities and the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO).

The issue of the disposal of radioactive waste continues to loom in the minds of many people as an unsolved problem. Current problems with such waste and contamination in the military sector probably reinforce these fears. There exists,

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however, a very large degree of consensus among government experts as to how radioactive waste - of low, medium and high activity - is to be safely disposed of. This consensus is gradually being articulated in a new series of IAEA documents called Radioactive Waste Safety Standards Series (RADWASS).

I should also mention that, although no case has been found of "dumping" of radioactive waste in developing countries, the IAEA has responded to calls for an instrument excluding such practices. Thus, the 1989 Basel Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal has been supplemented by a Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste, adopted by consensus last month by the IAEA General Conference. This code affirms the sovereign right of every State to prohibit the movement of such waste into, from or through its territory and requires that transboundary movements should take place in accordance with internationally accepted safety standards, and with prior notification and consent. The General Conference decided to keep the subject under active review, including the desirability of concluding a legally binding instrument under IAEA auspices.

Despite their pressing energy needs, most developing countries are not in a position to use the large, complex and costly nuclear power reactors which are currently in operation in most countries. If smaller, simpler-to-operate and less costly power reactors became available, which seems rather likely in a 10-year perspective, interest would increase. Already a number of developing countries are requesting that an inquiry should be made by the Agency into the technical and economic feasibility of using nuclear reactors for sea-water desalination. Considering the vast dimensions of the problem of shortages of drinking water, this request is understandable and will be accommodated.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

Most assistance and technology transfer to developing countries through the IAEA concerns non-power projects. To our regret, the Agency's share in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) financing during the fourth programming cycle has declined. Fortunately, however, the Agency's Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund, based on voluntary contributions, has grown considerably and has made possible expansion of assistance and technology transfer in the fields of agriculture, medicine, industry, environmental protection, hydrology, and so forth. Thus, more projects have become possible, dealing for instance with the improvement of crop yields, pest eradication, water management, radiation treatment of cancer - to mention only a few. Let me, however, be a little more specific about one current project of great interest.

This concerns the actions under way to eradicate the new world screwworm in North Africa. The infestation has been spreading rapidly in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and, if not stopped, could threaten cattle and wildlife not only in countries in the Mediterranean basin but also in other countries in Africa and the Middle East. A major inter-agency eradication programme has been launched, utilizing insects sterilized by gamma rays, a technique which has been effectively used in North America. A number of organizations, including FAO, IAEA, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and UNDP, are now co-operating with Libya in this large programme, which has been welcomed and encouraged by the Economic and Social Council. With FAO as the overall lead agency the IAEA has been providing technical leadership and research support.

Let me mention, lastly, that many of the isotope techniques promoted by the Agency in developing countries are related to environmental research and problem-solving. The use of the sterile-insect technique in the screwworm project has the important fringe benefit of reducing the amounts of pesticide residues

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which would have resulted from a conventional eradication approach. Agency projects on fertilizer uptake and nitrogen fixation lead to reduced fertilizer requirements, providing relief for the environment as well as for the farmer's pocket. A large-scale multidisciplinary project of great environmental interest relates to the Brazilian Amazon. The project, which is now in its fifth year, uses radioisotope techniques to study the effects of land use on the ecology and climate of the Amazon.

I should like to conclude with a few comments on financing and management in the United Nations system.

First, I must report to the Assembly that, although for many years the budgets of the IAEA have evolved as consensus documents - at zero real growth - and although the Agency has always been praised for efficiency, we sometimes face severe financial problems owing to late payments by member States. Only six weeks ago we were facing a cash crisis and the risk of interrupting our activities. Fortunately, a sufficient number of payments were received to avert the crisis. However, I must add my voice to that of those who urge Member States to budget and time their membership contributions to international organizations in such a way that they comply with the rules which have been adopted in these organizations with their own support. Organizations set up and supported by the world community of States and used increasingly as vital instruments of this community should not be exposed to the risk of insolvency.

Secondly, I must again convey to the General Assembly my concern about the deteriorating conditions of employment of professional staff, relating for instance to post adjustments, salary determinations, pension matters and the like. There are unfortunately indications that as a result of this deterioration the IAEA has lost the competitive edge it used to have in the small sector of the labour market of engineers and scientists from which it draws its very specialized staff. The

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reality is that we can only function well and have the respect of the nuclear world if our staff are on a par with the highly qualified national staff that are our counterparts in member States.

We share the aim of a single unified international civil service through the application of common personnel standards, but the common system should not be a straitjacket. The organizations of the United Nations family share common goals and have mechanisms for co-ordination, but their individual objectives, programmes and modes of operating, as well as their location, must make possible conditions of employment which are responsive to their different needs, while, of course, maintaining the essential degree of commonality. I would appeal to the General Assembly to bear this in mind when it takes decisions affecting the common system as a whole.

Thirdly, and lastly, may I refer to the functioning of an even more important common system - namely, the family of United Nations organizations. Whether we want it or not, modern communications are bringing about a rapid integration in the world, with benefits in trade and the transfer of ideas and technology, but also collisions of interest and conflict from new proximity.

At no time has the need for common rules and instruments for common action been greater and at no time has the overall climate for practical global co-operation been more promising. We do not have an international government, but we have a common system of intergovernmental organizations that works and moves through conciliation, co-ordination and consensus. It is incumbent upon us to make the fullest use of these instruments to preserve the planet from environmental destruction, to bring about development and the protection of human rights, to achieve verified disarmament and arms control and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In all these areas the IAEA is ready to do its share and make its contribution to the work of the common system.

(Mr. Blix, IAEA)

Permit me in closing to express IAEA's appreciation to the Austrian Government, which is the excellent host of the Agency and several other organizations of the United Nations family.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Poland, who will introduce draft resolution A/45/L.9.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): The Polish delegation is pleased to commend the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix, for his lucid comprehensive statement covering the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during 1989.

Poland has high regard for the useful role played by the IAEA in fostering international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the safe development of nuclear energy, and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Because of the broad scope and great variety of the Agency's activities and programmes in 1989, it is very difficult to deal with them all here today in the course of a short intervention. Therefore, I shall confine myself to issues of special significance, the first of which is the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity. In this regard, the IAEA has made a significant contribution by providing expertise through its numerous missions, technical assistance and training, and various reports and recommendations on nuclear safety standards.

The Agency is focusing its attention on such issues as comparisons between nuclear and other types of energy, from the point of view of their impact on the environment and the dissemination of information on the ecological advantages of nuclear energy - so long as the highest standards of safety are applied - and this deserves our full support.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

At the same time, the Agency is the most authoritative and most suitable institution to be broadly involved in dealing with the problems relating to the social acceptability of nuclear energy. In the world-wide debate on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, IAEA should have a central role to play.

My remarks on the topic of the social acceptability of nuclear power have a deep reason behind them. In this connection, I am voicing my delegation's regret concerning the suspension of the nuclear power-plant construction in Poland. In the light of this decision, the confidence in nuclear power can be restored in Poland only when it is applied as well as tested in the West, with highly reliable technology and equipment. In this regard, the shortest way towards achieving this goal leads through the application in Poland of the best technology of the European Community, the United States of America or Canada.

Additionally, the Polish delegation is of the view that an early acceptance by all members of the international community of common standards of nuclear safety and an early agreement on a comprehensive liability régime for nuclear damage, including State liability, would further contribute to the public's acceptance of nuclear power throughout the world. For its part, Poland has decided to accede to the Vienna Convention and to the Joint Protocol to the Vienna and Paris Conventions on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

I wish also to recall here that IAEA has worked out a methodology for defining the radiation levels at which the consumption or importing of different kinds of food should be banned because of their radioactive contamination. The unified standards applied by various Governments would undoubtedly increase public confidence in peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

My delegation welcomes the information given by the Director General of IAEA, Mr. Blix, that

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"a conference will be arranged by the IAEA in September 1991 to discuss the next phase of international co-operation in the field of the safety of nuclear power". (supra., p. 14)

This initiative represents one more proof that IAEA has been on the cutting edge of events for a long time.

My Government attaches great importance to the work of the Agency in providing safeguards for the use of nuclear materials. Today the increasing quantity of safeguarded material, the growing complexity of the nuclear-fuel cycle and rapid technological changes in fuel-cycle processes call for measures to ensure that IAEA will not lag behind in technological advancement. In this context, I wish to announce that my country has given up the old, time-consuming procedure of approving safeguard inspectors on its territory.

In a recently completed study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification one may read:

"In operating its safeguards system, the IAEA has acquired valuable experience in ensuring the non-diversion of nuclear material from peaceful purposes as well as in handling inspection procedures. This experience has been drawn upon in designing verification regimes for various agreements and could be of considerable value in devising future verification régimes." (A/45/372, para. 136)

My delegation fully shares that appraisal.

In the same document there are estimates by the Swedish delegation that to bring all civil nuclear activities in all nuclear-weapon States under the IAEA safeguards it would be necessary to double the Agency's expenditures on safeguards.

Poland appreciates very much the decision of nuclear-weapon States to place some of their nuclear facilities under the IAEA safeguards as a gesture of their

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good will; but what we all need most of all is to create all the necessary pre-conditions for the greatest possible reduction of nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future. Poland supports all measures leading to this goal.

I should like especially to underscore the important idea contained in Mr. Blix's statement:

> "... programmes of regional nuclear co-operation could be added to the safeguards as an important factor yielding both economic benefits and mutual transparence. Confidence through control by verification would then be strengthened by confidence through co-operation". (supra., p. 3)

In this context it is necessary to mention the nuclear material market. My delegation regards the tendency of major nuclear suppliers to co-operate more closely among themselves as a positive phenomenon.

Poland is of the view that the Fourth Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has brought a strong reaffirmation of the IAEA's crucial role in ensuring compliance with the Treaty, through its safeguard system and its activities of vital importance to international peace and security. My delegation respects and supports this tendency.

Being guided by an understanding of the necessity to strengthen the non-proliferation régime, Poland welcomes an announcement recently made by South Africa of the intention of its Government to begin discussions with IAEA on the conclusion of the safeguard agreement. My delegation believes that South Africa's example will be followed by other countries concerned.

The significant scope of resources allocated in 1989 by the IAEA for technical assistance may serve as an example of the outstanding job done by the Agency's secretariat. However, to succeed finally in this domain the full implementation by

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Member States of their voluntary obligations is also essential. Poland, in spite of its economic difficulties, has been able to fulfil its obligations. Moreover, we declare our readiness to intensify our involvement in the IAEA activities through: first, increased participation in the IAEA regional and interregional field projects; secondly, arranging more training courses under IAEA fellowships; thirdly, hosting in our country various seminars, training courses and so on; and, fourthly, sharing with the developing countries our experience in the organization of measuring the doses of contamination of the environment, materials and foodstuffs, including the application of the laser-beam technology for purification of the flue gases at coal-burning plants and so on. As usual, we are open to meeting other wishes of the Agency and developing countries.

Poland, which is this year chairing the IAEA Board of Governors, declares its readiness to support the Agency in the fulfilment of its important task in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and invites the other IAEA members to fruitful and mutually beneficial co-operation.

In conclusion, as an expression of my Government's support for the IAEA activities, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the delegations of Belgium, Nigeria, Portugal, Romania and my own delegation, the draft resolution on IAEA's 1989 report. It is based on last year's resolution, which was adopted by the General Assembly by consensus. We expect that this year the draft resolution will be adopted in the same way.

Mr. ERDÖS (Hungary): The Hungarian delegation wishes to express appreciation for the report which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, and for the excellent presentation that has just been given by Mr. Hans Blix, the Agency's Director-General. It gives me pleasure to assure him that we agree with the main conclusions of his report, with the evaluation of the Agency's activities in the previous period, as well as with the proposals concerning the future.

During the course of the thirty-fourth General Conference of IAEA - which the representative of my country was honoured to chair - the new Government of the Republic of Hungary reaffirmed its commitment to the Agency's statute, and underscored its continued readiness to play a useful role in further strengthening and enlarging the activities of IAEA. That position is a logical outcome of the evaluation expressed on various occasions by the Go ernment of Hungary, which I would like to reaffirm today also before this forum. Within the system of United Nations related agencies, IAEA is considered as an organization of outstanding importance, which successfully fulfils its duties as laid down in its Statute.

Like the great majority of the States members of IAEA, Hungary has profited from the vast experience acquired by the Agency in numerous fields, and has made good use of the possibilities for international co-operation. The function of IAEA to contribute to the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes has greatly helped my country in establishing its nuclear energy production capacity. The Agency is a constant source of assistance in the realization of our aspiration to maximum safety in nuclear energy production, as well as in the reliable and economical operation of our nuclear power station, which provides the country with almost 40 per cent of its energy production.

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

I could cite numerous examples to prove that the material and intellectual resources of IAEA have contributed to the safe and efficient operation of our nuclear energy production. That background has given reassurance to the public, and professional incentives to industry. The realization of a programme aimed at modernizing the inspection system, which was carried out at the atomic energy station located in the city of Paks through the technical-technological assistance programme of IAEA, or the mission of the Operational Safety Review Team, which scrutinized in a complex manner the operation and safety aspects at the same station, or the mission preceding the Integrated Safety Assessment of Nuclear Reactors carried out at the research reactor in Budapest, are but a few examples.

We agree with, and support, the efforts to place special emphasis on nuclear safety in the Agency's activities. The forthcoming meeting on questions of safety in nuclear power plants, initiated by the European Communities and supported by IAEA, will be an important event in keeping with this trend. We also support the Agency's initiatives for the experimental introduction of the international nuclear event scale, which might promote relevant, authentic and comparable information on nuclear accidents and extraordinary events.

In the field of legal aspects of nuclear safety, the activity of IAEA is similarly characterized by noteworthy aspirations. In this context, we welcome the fact that there has been an increase in the number of States parties to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. IAEA has started a promising study on all aspects of liability for nuclear damage. Last year, Hungary became party to the Vienna Convention and to the Joint Protocol Relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention. We have been actively participating in the study, which is aimed at modernizing and making comprehensive the existing régimes on liability for nuclear damage.

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

The International Atomic Energy Agency has achieved notable results in exploring the multifaceted relationship between energy production and the protection of the human environment. The Government of Hungary is about to redefine its concept of energy policy and, in that process, it wishes to capitalize on the intellectual potential and experience which the Agency has accumulated. In so doing, we hope not only to improve our country's ecological situation, but also to contribute to global efforts in environmental protection.

The Agency has an outstanding role to play in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. At the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, the representative of the Government of Hungary evaluated its performance in that field, and noted with great satisfaction that nuclear materials in facilities under IAEA safeguards have been used solely for peaceful purposes. We are interested in maintaining a reliable and trustworthy safeguards system. Therefore, we support all efforts to make the IAEA system capable of coping with the growing quantitative and qualitative demands. Our fundamental expectation of that system is to provide, currently and in the future, assurances to every State party to the non-proliferation Treaty in exchange for their meeting their obligations. In this context, I would like to call attention to the many suggestions and proposals made in the course of the Fourth Review Conference, in plenary meetings or in committees, aimed at improving the safeguards activities of IAEA, and strengthening confidence in the non-proliferation régime.

The annual report of IAEA contains details on its technical assistance programmes. As I have already mentioned, Hungary has benefited several times from such programmes, and counts on the continuation of this kind of co-operation. At the same time, however, I wish to mention that the Republic of Hungary, on the basis of its modest but growing knowledge and experience in the peaceful

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

application of nuclear energy, has already been sharing knowledge with other countries that can utilize it in their own process of development. Let me state that we shall maintain and further strengthen such co-operative relations in the years to come.

In conclusion, I wish to underline that we accept the Agency's report, and agree with the draft resolution presented just now by the representative of Poland under item 14. I should also like to convey our thanks to Mr. Hans Blix for his successful direction, and commend the work done by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. KRAVCHANKA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The item that is under discussion today in the General Assembly is not an ordinary, run-of-the-mill item on the agenda for us Byelorussians. The field of activity of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the goals in the interest of which the Agency was created, are for us vital in the literal sense of the word. To be more specific, it is a matter of the very survival of the Byelorussian nation.

Our delegation has listened with great attention to the statement by Mr. Blix, the Director General of IAEA. Both the statement and the report once again confirm that the Agency plays an important role in the life of mankind today. The IAEA's contribution to attainment of the goal of the safe, stable and environmentally sound development to which the world community aspires is considerable.

I ask delegations to put aside for a moment the wealth of detail of the Agency's work and turn their thoughts to the basic question: what is our work and the work of the Agency really about? The answer to this question is contained in the Declaration adopted at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly a few months ago in the new world circumstances. It is that the focus of development must be the human being with his myriad physical and spiritual needs.

The human being is the starting point of that scale by which the future activities of the Agency will clearly be measured; activities in a new world, increasingly developing its understanding of universal human priorities and the fundamental values of the human personality.

I do not deny that this is perhaps an unusual point of view with regard to the issues relating to the activities of the Agency, which operates in a strictly technological field.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

But would it really be compatible with the wisdom of mankind's collective intelligence as embodied here in the General Assembly to lose sight of the human being in the complex multifaceted activities of the Agency? It is precisely this line of thought that encourages us to hope that the humanitarian aspect will increasingly be built into the goals of the IAEA in a changing world.

Turning now to our vision of the prospects for the development of the IAEA I would like to stress the following.

First, one of the most important strategic areas of the Agency's work, in the opinion of Byelorussia as well as of other States, is its contribution to the strengthening of peace and universal security. We would welcome greater emphasis on its monitoring functions in order to provide protection against the diversion of nuclear materials covered by the safeguards régime to military purposes. This is particularly relevant in the context of the growing concern of the international community about the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the use of the spectre of that weapon as a means of exerting psychological and military pressure.

This explains our unswerving support for the consistent line taken by the Soviet Union and other States, which are tired of being prisoners of fear and hostages to an atomic Armageddon. We firmly support the policy of strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the international régime based on the Treaty, and a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Only a combination of the two areas of endeavour can, both in space and in time, limit the existence of nuclear weapons and ensure their eventual elimination.

Second, the Byelorussian SSR supports the recent ratification by the Soviet Union and the United States of their bilateral Treaties on the Limitation of

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

Underground Nuclear Weapons Tests and on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, as well as the protocols on verification to those Treaties. This opens up new possibilities for the full and comprehensive prohibition of all nuclear tests and the strengthening of the international non-proliferation régime and of security guarantees for non-nuclear States.

This is important for us because, as was stressed in the statement made in the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Byelorussian SSR, Mr. Kebich, on 26 September this year, the Byelorussian SSR is seeking to achieve the status of a nuclear-free zone for its territory and is studying the possibility of acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Today our Republic wishes to put forward from this rostrum an initiative concerning the creation in the future of a nuclear-free belt composed of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Baltic States, which could be joined by the countries of central Europe, if they so wished. We are making this proposal as a follow-up to the USSR's initiative on making the Baltic a nuclear-free zone and building on the proposals of the central European States for zones of reduced military activity in their region. We hope that this initiative will be carefully studied and will receive a positive response.

We are keenly aware that the achievement of nuclear-free status for the Byelorussian SSR would affect the strategic interests of many parties and that this initiative therefore calls for a responsible and carefully considered approach. The Byelorussian SSR intends to adopt such an approach and is guided by the principle that steps to achieve this goal must not be detrimental to any country's legitimate security interests or, indeed, to the stability of the continent in general.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

Third, the Byelorussian SSR is especially interested in the expansion of the Agency's security programme for all types of nuclear facilities, in particular nuclear power plants. The relevance of this area of endeavour for us and for the whole international community is undoubtedly becoming much more acute as nuclear facilities age, with the consequent increasing risk of accidents.

According to the IAEA report, in the 1990s 50 per cent of functioning nuclear power stations will have been in operation for 25 years and 70 per cent of functioning research reactors will have been in operation for 20 years. In our view, a particularly important period is approaching for the activities of the IAEA.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

Fourth, our delegation appreciates the Agency's inspection activities in monitoring the safety of existing nuclear power stations and welcomes the readiness of the Governments of the USSR and of other countries in Eastern and Central Europe to carry out major, objective safety checks, particularly on old nuclear power stations. The Byelorussian SSR is ready to make its own experts available to take part in the Agency's work in this area. We also intend to join the open-ended working group which is to study, under Agency auspices, all the complex aspects of liability in respect of nuclear accidents, and are convinced of the need to develop an international convention on liability for damage caused by nuclear incidents and by large-scale disasters in particular.

Fifth, the Byelorussian SSR is convinced that preventing releases of radioactive substances, and other nuclear safety issues, must have top priority in the work of Member States and of the Agency itself. Our Republic supports the expansion of future programmes in this area, and also intends to take part, in 1991, in an IAEA international conference at a high political level which is to discuss areas of activity directed towards ensuring nuclear safety during the current decade.

Sixth, as a State party to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, the Byelorussian SSR calls upon all States to accede to these IAEA Conventions and to strengthen the international and national mechanisms for implementing them. An important role can also be played by bilateral agreements in solving the problems of nuclear safety and the radiological protection of the population. The Byelorussian SSR is prepared to enter into this kind of co-operation with interested States members of the IAEA, particularly with neighbouring countries.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

Seventh, the Byelorussian SSR actively supports the establishment and development of a system to provide information on incidents at nuclear power stations, information which has so far been available only to a very small number of experts, and considers that one of the most important tasks of the IAEA is to organize a broader international exchange of information on post-disaster phenomena. This would promote a more open discussion, help the right lessons to be drawn from our grim recent past and assist the exchange of differing points of view on the prospects for the development of nuclear power.

Mankind will most probably not be able to do without the peaceful uses of nuclear technology both now and in the future, but every country and every people has the right to determine when, how and in what circumstances they should be used in its economic development strategy and its strategy for preserving environmental balance and the biosphere. It is not a mere coincidence that in 11 out of the 27 countries where there are currently nuclear power stations in operation, no new nuclear plant is currently under construction.

It is obviously completely out of the question to construct nuclear power stations in areas which have already suffered the effects of nuclear accidents - from a humanitarian standpoint, principally. Our Parliament and Government, in view of the situation in which the Byelorussian people finds itself and in the light of the categorical demands the public has made, have taken the decision to halt the construction of two nuclear power stations in Byelorussian territory. In our Republic, there has been enthusiastic support for the decision by the Ukrainian SSR to shut down the Chernobyl nuclear power station completely.

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The fears Chernobyl caused for the future of nuclear power in the minds of its advocates are no justification for the lack of information available to the world community about the true scale of the Chernobyl disaster, since this lack merely holds back the development of international solidarity and the flow of voluntary assistance to the victims. Without over-dramatizing the situation, I can state that among the people of the Republic, who are living in a very difficult situation in psychological terms, there has emerged a clear element of mistrust in respect of the activities of the official structures, particularly those in place in 1986, and there is also hope that international assistance will be increased. I want to be completely frank with the Assembly: the bitter truth is that it is only now, four and a half years later, that we are finally and with tremendous difficulty making a breach in the wall of indifference, silence and lack of sympathy, and for this we ourselves are largely to blame.

The verdict of history has yet to be passed on those in our Republic who for over three years hid the truth about the effects of the accident from our people. It is difficult to say why they did this, and to disentangle cause from effect: was the deception caused by secrecy, or was the secrecy the result of the deception? Either way, it was inhuman.

Practically everyone in this Hall now will have had occasion to use a map, but I do not think I will be wrong if I say that only those in the Ukrainian and Byelorussian delegations will ever have had to use charts of radiation levels in their daily lives. Our newspapers print them: just imagine a situation in which the life of every family, every individual, must be organized, every day, around such charts. We are literally living under the sword of Damocles.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

A mere glance at these charts will make it clear to you how unprecedented the situation in Byelorussia is in its complexity. Seventy per cent of the Chernobyl radionuclides landed on Byelorussia. They have contaminated a third of its territory. One in five of the total population, 2,200,000 people, including almost 800,000 children, have become the innocent victims of Chernobyl, hostages to the hazardous aftermath of radiation. From 120,000 to 150,000 people residing in zones of especially high risk are awaiting relocation to settlements now under construction in uncontaminated areas. The geographical limits and the safety criteria for living in the contaminated parts of the Republic have yet to be precisely defined. Over 30,000 people were evacuated in the very first months after the Chernobyl catastrophe. This area is now a radiation desert, depopulated no-go areas covering many hundreds of thousands of hectares, fenced off with barbed wire. It will be impossible to live there for hundreds of years to come, even according to the most optimistic estimates. New patches of radiation contamination keep appearing. Decontamination is not producing the results we hoped for. Radionuclides are spreading throughout the Republic and are threatening to spread even beyond. They have been detected in people even in uncontaminated areas.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

In order to fully comprehend the enormity of what has happened it is necessary to review the history of the Byelorussian people within the context of European history. There are not many peoples to which history has been as cruel as it has been to the Byelorussian people. More than once over the last centuries it has seen its capacity for survival put to the test. For centuries our territory, which has been a kind of cross-roads of Europe, has not been spared a single invasion, campaign or aggression.

Wars and plagues have with terrible and implacable regularity at least once a century reduced the Byelorussian population by a quarter to a half. Between the middle of the seventeenth century and the end of the eighteenth, its population was halved. At the end of the seventeenth century fewer than one million people were left on our soil. Our stock was on the brink of physical extinction. At the beginning of the nineteenth century we lost a quarter of our population. In the years of the First World War we lost a fifth of our population. And the whole world knows that in the holocaust of the Second World War one out of four inhabitants of our Republic was killed.

At the site of Khatyn, the peaceful inhabitants of the Byelorussian village were put to the torch along with the village. In the Memorial Centre there now stand in mourning three birch trees, and in place of the fourth tree burns an eternal flame in memoriam. I should like to stress that it has taken a full 30 years for the population to be restored to the pre-war figure.

Then there was this new ordeal: Chernobyl, the Calvary of the twentieth century for the Byelorussian people. As I stand at this rostrum, in my mind I can hear the now stilled voices of my people cry out over and over again the same question: why? why?

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

In Slavic languages, including the Ukrainian and Byelorussian languages, there is a word "chernobyl", which means wormwood, bitter grass. This has striking relevance to the Chernobyl tragedy. I am no fatalist. I do not believe in the blind inevitability of fate, but who can fail to be moved by these tragic and elegiac words from Revelation, which must leave their indelible imprint on the heart:

> "... and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water;
>
> And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." (The Holy Bible, Revelation 8:10-11)

At the end of the twentieth century the human intellect - educated in rationalism, in faith, in the creative power of science and knowledge - refuses to accept that those words may prove prophetic and fateful for the Byelorussian people. To prevent Chernobyl from becoming an irreversible tragedy for the Byelorussian people, we must immediately adopt a more comprehensive set of additional measures, particularly medical and biological measures. The reality is vastly different from the earlier estimates of Soviet and foreign experts. This has been demonstrated by reliable data concerning the deterioration in the health of our Republic's inhabitants.

There is a particular danger to the thyroid glands of children. Even now, in the southern area of Byelorussia, the average incidence of thyroid disease has doubled. In zones affected by radiation there has been a seven-fold or eight-fold increase in the incidence of anaemia; a ten-fold increase in chronic pathology of the nasopharynx; and a 1.5 to two-fold increase in the number of congenital birth defects.

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The manifold changes in the immune, endocrine, nervous and hemogenic systems of the human body and their slow and steady progression constitute a sort of radiation AIDS.

A serious threat is posed by deferred oncological and genetic pathologies. An upward trend has been observed in the incidence of cancer and leukemia among children. According to the estimates of certain authoritative American researchers, the number of cancer cases is expected to reach its peak between 1994 and 1996.

The chronic effects of radiation over a number of generations may lead to a geometric increase in the level of mutations. There exists a genuine threat to the gene pool of our nation. The potential genetic threat to the population, as is clearly shown by data from a sociological survey, in the next few years may form, in the sphere of marriage and in other areas of human relations, a kind of band of outcasts. A demographic decline has already begun. The natural population growth of the Byelorussian SSR decreased from 7.4 per thousand in 1986 to 5.1 per thousand in 1989.

Our Republic is taking extraordinary measures. The Byelorussian SSR has appealed to the world community for assistance and co-operation, and it is grateful for the international solidarity and support that has been provided. However, assistance has come mainly through non-governmental channels. We appreciate the co-operation that has begun with the international specialized agencies of the United Nations and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

A second Chernobyl must be prevented. We need the full store of international experience in the struggle against the consequences of such disasters. Such experience could be useful for the international community since the Chernobyl disaster has global consequences. This was shown in the report of the

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation published in 1988 and compiled on the basis of data provided by 34 countries.

The fields of future international co-operation will be defined in large measure by the results of international research and expert missions carried out in the affected areas, in which a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have taken part, including the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and IAEA, as well as the Commission of European Communities, the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the World Council of Churches.

Our constant interest in the various forms of co-operation with the IAEA has been demonstrated by the scientific examination of radiological effects carried out under the auspices of the Agency and the signing by the Byelorussian SSR, the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR with the IAEA of the quadripartite agreement on conducting international research, and the bilateral agreement with the Agency on receiving technical assistance.

Our Republic intends to participate actively in working out the strategy of rehabilitating ecological systems, preserving human health and protecting the population against radiation. We are interested in the activities of, and co-operation with, IAEA on the quantification of levels of radiation and radioactivity in food and animal fodder for intervention criteria and recognition of the role of "hot particles", effects of low-level radiation, radio-biological effects and other deferred consequences.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

We propose that an international centre be set up in the Byelorussian SSR specifically designed to study hitherto unknown radiation ecological, and radiobiological problems which would logically supplement the international research of the Chernobyl centre in the Ukrainian SSR and the radiation medical centre in Obninsk in the Russian Federation.

The Byelorussian SSR proposes a review of the criteria, terms and procedures for the adoption of relevant decisions in the IAEA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other international agencies and programmes within the framework of the United Nations system for the provision of special assistance to States in cases of transboundary nuclear damage.

These should be primarily States which do not possess the necessary national capacity to take protective measures. We propose also to set up a special voluntary Chernobyl trust fund for the financing of appropriate programmes of internati al co-operation and assistance. If such a fund is set up we are firmly convinced that its Board could include eminent political figures, former presidents, Heads of State or Government, businessmen, prominent representatives of the scientific and cultural communities, leaders of religious communities and faiths and famous sportsmen. The IAEA, the Interagency Committee on Reacting to Cases of Nuclear Accidents, and a number of specialized agencies and organs within the United Nations system could also participate in the activities of such a fund.

Today we wish to make one more proposal: to proclaim 26 April, the day when the Chernobyl disaster occurred, as an international day for the prevention of nuclear and other industrial disasters. I wish to emphasize that the Parliaments of Byelorussia and the Ukraine by special decrees have already proclaimed 26 April, the day of the Chernobyl tragedy, a day of mourning and remembrance.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

The Byelorussian SSR believes it to be very important for the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly to adopt a special resolution which would reflect an understanding of the global nature of the catastrophe and to formulate concrete plans for stepping up co-ordinated action between the United Nations system, including the IAEA, and other international organizations in order to ease and minimize the global and local consequences of Chernobyl.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the decisions to be taken by the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the IAEA report and also on questions of the effects of atomic radiation and international co-operation in the easing and minimizing of the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe will promote more active co-operation among United Nations member States and increase the effectiveness of the work of the Agency itself.

All those problems can be resolved only if there is harmonious interaction between ecology and politics, radiation safety and morality and further advances in scientific thought and genuine humanism.

I am firmly convinced that the world community will not be able to enter the twenty-first century with a clear conscience without solving global problems, particularly those related to the prevention of war and the elimination of hunger, disease and underdevelopment - and here we declare our full solidarity with our brothers in the developing countries - including the problem of saving the people who suffered from Chernobyl - Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and other nationalities - the matter of eliminating the threat to the heriditary identity of the nation.

(Mr. Kravchanka, Byelorussian SSR)

Let us hope that it will not be the words quoted above from that great literary monument of all times and peoples, the Bible, that will be prophetic and prove to be our fate but rather the words of our national Byelorussian poet, Ouladzimir Dubouka, ringing with faith in the indomitable will, steadfastness and tremendous vitality of our people:

"Oh, Belarus, my wild rose,
A green leaf, a red flower
Neither whirlwind will ever bind you
Nor chernobyl [wormwood] will ever cover"

Our people believe and trust that people of good will, fellow residents of our common home, planet Earth, will not leave us to face catastrophe alone.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m